THE WITCH'S WARNING

Come closer, friends. Don't be afraid! There's nothing here to harm you. Does that skeleton on the wall bother you? He shouldn't. The dead can't walk . . . or can they? I know of a man who had no blood in his . . . Wait! Who swings the rusty hinges of my door? Heh, heh, you needn't look so cornered. Light the candle sticking in that skull. We do need more light, don't we?

Ah, you see my cauldron! Its sides have held brews that would have eaten into steel as burning pokers into flesh! See, see that white powder that lines the rim? It is the powder pounded from human bones. You say there are red streaks down the sides of the kettle? Ha-ha-ha-ha!

It is over this bubbling pot that I weave my tales of weird fact. Aye, fact, for all of my stories come from what has been and what will be . . . These stories can happen or may have happened to you! I will freeze your spine with tales of witch-craft, ghouls, and man-made monsters. I will make your scalp crawl as the dead dig their claws into the screaming, terrified living. I . . . Where are you going? Heh, heh! But, enough of this . . . It is time to start the fire under the cauldron and weave my stories. Stop shaking so much! You won't be able to turn to the first page of

WITCHES TALES

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WITCHES TALES

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NOT MANY PEOPLE WHO REMEMBER THAT TIME OF HORROR LIKE TO TELL ABOUT IT— BUT, ON RAINY NIGHTS, WHEN THE WIND HOWLS WEIRDLY IN THE DEEP VALLEYS OF KENTUCKY, AND THE FOG FLITS LIKE A GHOST THRU THE TREES, THEY STILL TALK IN WHISPERS ABOUT...

THE MONSTER OF MAD MOUNTAIN

WHAT WAS HAPPENING IN THE LABORATORY ON THE MOUNTAIN'S PEAK? WHY DID THE FLICKERING LIGHTS BURN LATER THAN THE STARS? WHAT HAPPENED THAT NIGHT, WHEN...

WE'VE FOUND THE SECRET TO ETERNAL LIFE, MOJUK. OUR EXPERIMENTS WILL ASTOUND THE WORLD WHEN I REPORT THEM TO THE INTERNATIONAL MEETING OF SCIENTISTS IN ENGLAND. MAYBE NOW THE PEOPLE WILL UNDERSTAND AND STOP CALLING THIS "MAD MOUNTAIN".

YES, DOCTOR. SOON THEY WILL KNOW THE SECRETS WE HAVE FOUND IN ELECTRICITY.

BUT, I'M GOING TO SEE THEY STAY SECRETS!

NOW REMEMBER, MOJUK, NO WILD EXPERIMENTS. THIS CAN BE A POWER FOR GOOD. HMM, BETTER GET GOING...

LET ME HELP YOU, DOCTOR...

THANKS, MOJUK, I--AIEEEE!

YOU FOOL! DID YOU THINK I WAS GOING TO LET THIS SECRET OUT OF MY HANDS!

YOU'RE DYING, ROWL--DO YOU HEAR? DYING! HA-HA! IF YOU ONLY KNEW WHAT MY PLANS ARE--BUT, I'M AFRAID YOU HAVEN'T GOT TIME TO LISTEN!

MOJUK, YOU'RE (COUGH) YOU'RE MAD--RAVING M...MAD! (COUGH-COUGH) YOU MUSTN'T USE THE RESULTS, YOU- UHNN!

DEAD!! YOU'RE AS DEAD AS YOUR HOPES, DOCTOR! I'M AFRAID YOU ARE GOING TO BE LATE, DOCTOR, FOR THAT LITTLE TRIP. IN FACT, YOU'RE THE LATE DR. ROWL NOW! HA, HA, HA, HA!

I'LL BE THE GREATEST SCIENTIST THE WORLD HAS EVER KNOWN! I CAN CREATE AN ARMY OF SUPERMEN! WITH MY KNOWLEDGE OF ELECTRICITY I'LL SHOCK THE WORLD... I'LL SHOCK IT TO DEATH IF I HAVE TO!

THE MANIACAL MIND OF THE DOCTOR WAS NOW SET FREE TO PUT ITS WILD HOPES AND DREAMS INTO ACTION--THE DREAMS THAT HAD BEEN SEETHING IN IT FOR YEARS. DREAMS THAT WERE NIGHTMARES OF TERROR.

NOW, IF I CAN ONLY FIND THE RIGHT MAN FOR MY FIRST SUBJECT, SOMEONE BIG AND POWERFUL THAT WILL BE ABLE TO WITHSTAND GREAT SHOCKS.

YOU, OVER THERE! YA CRAZY GALOOT- YOU WANT TO GET KILLED?

HEY! WHAT'S THAT?

GET OUT O' THERE! THAT BULL'S A KILLER!

NO! NO!! I MUSTN'T DIE! IT CAN'T END LIKE THIS! SAVE ME--SAVE ME, SOMEONE! YIEEE!

LENNIE'LL HELP YOU!

HE'LL KILL ME!

POW!

YOU...YOU SAVED MY LIFE! I THOUGHT I WAS FINISHED!

I'VE SEEN LENNIE DO SOME POWERFUL THINGS, BUT THAT BEATS ALL!

SURE. LENNIE'S THE STRONGEST MAN IN THESE HERE HILLS, MISTER.

AW, THAT WEREN'T NUTHIN'! I JIST HIT HIM A LITTLE. COULDA KNOCKED HIS HEAD CLEAR OFF. HERE, JIGGER.

GR-RR--

STRONG, ARE YOU, HMM? SAY THAT *IS* A POWERFUL *ARM* YOU HAVE THERE. HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO--AH--WORK FOR ME? I'LL DOUBLE YOUR PAY.

WELL, GOSH-I DON'T KNOW NOW-BUT MAYBE I WOULD IF'N YOU LET ME TAKE MY DOG, JIGGER, WITH ME. HE'S MY PAL.

IT WON'T BE HARD WORK. YOU'LL JUST HELP ME MOVE SOME MACHINERY.

THIS IS PERFECT. HE'S BIG AND STUPID. NOW I'VE GOT THE BRAWN TO MATCH MY MIGHTY BRAIN!

I CAN MOVE ANYTHING THAT AIN'T NAILED DOWN. JUST AS LONG AS THERE'S ENOUGH TO EAT FOR MY DOG.

WELL, I'LL BE A SOW'S EAR!

MOJUK BIDED HIS TIME, LIKE A WAITING RATTLESNAKE, TO CATCH LENNIE OFF GUARD AND STRIKE. THEN, ONE DAY...

THAT'S IT--JUST PICK UP THOSE TWO ELECTRODES AND BRING THEM TO ME...

SURE, DR. MO. AHHNN--

OH--OH--I *AM* SORRY, LENNIE-I-I--DIDN'T KNOW THOSE ELECTRODES WERE ALIVE. ARE YOU ALL RIGHT NOW?

SURE-I'M OKAY--JUST A LITTLE DIZZY--AND I FEEL FUNNY INSIDE...

ELECTRICITY! THE POWER AND SECRET OF LIFE! BLOW, YOU WINDS! CRACK THE EARTH, YOU STORMS WITH FLAMING BOLTS OF ELECTRIC FIRE! I HAVE FOUND THE MAN WHO IS GOING TO GIVE ME POWER. ***POWER...POWER!!*** THAT DOSE I GAVE LENNIE YESTERDAY WAS ENOUGH TO KILL A ***HORSE***, BUT HE JUST SHOOK IT OFF. I'LL MAKE HIM INVINCIBLE AND HE'LL BE ***MY*** SLAVE!!

BY DRUGGING HIS FOOD EVERY NIGHT, MOJUK WAS ABLE TO USE LENNIE FOR HIS EXPERIMENTS, AND STRANGE, HORRIBLE THINGS BEGAN TO HAPPEN...

HEH-HEH-HEH!! HE'S ABSORBING ENOUGH ELECTRICITY NOW TO KILL A HUNDRED MEN! A FEW MORE BIG DOSES AND I'LL BE READY TO RELEASE HIM ON THE WORLD...AND THIS IS ONLY THE BEGINNING!

HERE, ***SLAVE!*** PUT THIS SUIT ON. HURRY! YOU MUSTN'T TOUCH ME-RIGHT NOW YOU'RE A WALKING ***ELECTRIC CHAIR!***

YES, DOCTOR...

CRASH!

AH! SO--THE FINAL EFFECTS ARE SETTING IN, JUST AS I CALCULATED. YOU NO LONGER CAN STAND THE SIGHT OF FOOD, THAT'S BECAUSE YOU DON'T NEED ANY! THE ELECTRICITY IN YOUR BODY IS ALL THE FOOD YOU'LL EVER NEED!

ARRGH!

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO ME? I--I FEEL S-SO QUEER! THIS SUIT...WHERE AM I? I'LL KILL YOU...

HE STILL HAS THE POWER TO THINK FOR HIMSELF. BUT, A FEW MORE TREATMENTS AND I'LL DESTROY THAT!

PUT-THAT-DOWN-SLAVE. OBEY-ME!

NOW, GO INSIDE AND WAIT UNTIL I SEE WHO IS BOTHERING US. TONIGHT, I AM TO GIVE YOU THE FINAL TREATMENT.

I GO, AS YOU COMMAND!

KNOCK! KNOCK!

I'M VERY SORRY. YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO SEE LENNIE, TONIGHT. YOU SEE, HE WASN'T FEELING WELL, AND...

HOLY COW, JOE- DO *YOU* SEE WHAT I SEE!!

LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!

WHILE THE DOCTOR LAUGHS INSANELY AT THE TWO MEN WHO TEAR DOWN THE MOUNTAIN-SIDE, HE PREPARES FOR THE FINAL EXPERIMENTS.

URRGH! ARRGH! OH, MY HEAD- IT'S BUZZING... BUZZING...SOMETHING MUST BE THE MATTER WITH ME... I CAN'T REMEMBER...JIGGER! AM I GLAD TO SEE *YOU!* WHERE YOU BEEN, HUH, BOY?

C'MERE, JIGGER. WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU? DON'T YOU KNOW YOUR OLD PAL?

GRR-RRR

GROW-WRR

WHAT HAS THAT MOJUK DONE TO ME? I'VE GOT TO FIND HIM. I...OH, MY HEAD! I CAN'T THINK, I--ARGGH!

HUH? WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU? STAND BACK-STAND BACK! OBEY ME!

BWANG!

LABO
PRIV

NO!! BACK, YOU MAD BRUTE! YOU *MUSTN'T* TOUCH ME! BACK, DO YOU HEAR?

YOU HAVE MADE A MONSTER OUT OF ME! NOW, YOU'RE GONNA PAY!

AIEE-EE-EE

ZZ-Z-ZTT-T-

MOJUK HAD DARED TOO FAR! THE VERY POWER HE SOUGHT DESTROYED HIM! BUT THE EXPERIMENTS WERE TAKING EFFECT ON LENNIE. THE HUGE MAN'S BRAIN ACHED IN HIS HEAD, UNTIL FINALLY IT SEEMED TO CRACK LIKE A TREE SPLIT WITH LIGHTNING...

MY HEAD— MY HEAD! ARRGH!

WITH THE STRENGTH OF A DYNAMO, THE INSANE MONSTER GRASPS THE IRON BARS, AND THEY BEND IN HIS HANDS LIKE STRAWS! A GRUESOME TERROR IS BEING RELEASED UPON THE WORLD...

ZZZZ! CRACK!

MEANWHILE, IN THE VILLAGE...

I TELL YOU, I SAW THIS...THIS *THING* WITH MY OWN EYES!! ASK JOE JUKES IF THAT AIN'T THE GOSPEL TRUTH! I TELL YE, THERE AIN'T A MAN, WOMAN OR CHILD SAFE IN THESE HERE PARTS NOW! WE GOT TO GO UP THERE AND FIND OUT WHAT THIS MOJUK FELLER IS A-DOIN'!

HE'S RIGHT! I SAW IT, TOO! AN' IT WAS *HORRIBLE!*

WELL, WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR?

LET'S GET OUR RIFLES, MEN...

LOOK!! THERE IT GOES!

WHAT'S HE GOT IN HIS HANDS? ELECTRIC LIGHTS?

DON'T LET IT COME ANY NEARER!

DO YOU THINK YOU *HIT* 'IM, TOM?

NAW! I DON'T THINK SO. TOO *DARK* TO GET A *GOOD SHOT!*

SHOULD WE GO *AFTER* HIM?

NOT ME! YOU *CAN'T SEE* A THING IN THERE!

THRU THE *LONG, DREARY NIGHT* THE MEN TRIED TO PICK UP THE *TRAIL* OF THE *MONSTER*, BUT TO NO AVAIL. THEN AT *DAWN...*

WHOEE! I'M AS TIRED AS A *HOUND DOG'S* BEEN CHASING A FOX!

ME, TOO!

LOOK! LOOK! UP THERE!

THAT'S *HIM!* LET'S GET *HIM!*

LOOK OUT! *RUN FOR YOUR LIVES!*

LET ME *OUT* OF HERE!

HE'LL KILL US!

THERE WAS NO LONGER ANYTHING ABOUT *LENNIE* WHICH RESEMBLED HIS FORMER *HUMAN SHAPE*. HE WAS NOW A *CREATURE* OF *DESTRUCTION*, HIS MIND A SEETHING MASS, TELLING HIM TO *KILL--KILL--KILL!!*

MY GLORY- IT- IT'S THE *M-M-MONSTER!*

RAARGH! ARRGH!

HELP! HELP!

LOOK! THERE *HE* IS, NEXT TO THAT *BURNING WAGON!*

AFTER *HIM!* WE'LL GET *HIM* NOW!

BRING *HIM* DOWN!

DON'T LET *HIM* GET AWAY *AGAIN!*

THOSE *WIRES* LOOK RED *HOT!*

HE LOOKS LIKE HE'S LOSING *STRENGTH!*

LOOK! WE'VE GOT *HIM* NOW! HE'S *TRAPPED* HIMSELF! HOLD YOUR *FIRE!*

AND, AS THE ELECTRICAL FORCE DRAWS FROM THE MONSTER, A MIRACULOUS CHANGE TAKES PLACE...

JIGGER! MY LITTLE OLD *PAL!* WHERE YOU BEEN, *JIGGER!* I'VE M-MISSED YOU, G-GOOD OLD:.. *UHH-H-H--*

THE GATHERED FARMERS LOOK ON IN *AMAZEMENT* AS THEY SEE *LENNIE'S* FACE AGAIN. THE *TWISTED FEATURES* OF THE *MONSTER OF MAD MOUNTAIN* ARE GONE! THE MONSTER OF MAD MOUNTAIN IS DEAD!

A-WOOO-OOOO!

I'D NEVER *BELIEVED* IT IF'N I HADN'T SEEN IT WITH MY *OWN EYES!*

The End

HORROR ISLAND

He looked at the will that the lawyer handed him. In a broken but large handwriting, the will read, "I leave all my worldly possessions to my nephew, Rex Burton. These include a piece of paper, a piece of glass and the island of Drago, known more commonly as the 'Isle of Death.' I am to be buried on my island. It is there that I will live forevet."

Death instantly followed the writing of the will for the signature trailed off into a meaningless scribble. Rex looked up at the lawyer who was nervously zipping his case together.

"What do you make of it?"

"I-I have no opinion, Rex. I'm only supposed to see that you get what your uncle willed you."

"Look, Bill, you were the closest to my uncle. You took care of all his affairs. I want you to tell me what he meant in this will. I know he was eccentric but what is all this business about the 'Isle of Death' and living on forever?"

The lawyer saw that Rex was determined to get to the bottom of the mystery so he sat down, wiped his forehead and in a weak voice began to relate all that he knew.

"As you said, Rex, your uncle was eccentric. When he moved to his island he brought with him a tremendous library on magic and superstitions. After some time, the natives of the island began to leave. As they put it, 'The spirit of Death walked the paths of life.' They said that because, at times, they would find the bodies of their friends or of animals in the forest and there would not be a mark on the corpses! Everytime a body would be found a long, spine-chilling scream would come from the forest. Finally, the natives blamed everything on your uncle and gave the island the name 'Isle of Death.' Soon, all life left the island. Even the animals disappeared.

"Suddenly, one day, I got a call from your uncle. When I arrived he told me he was going to die and wanted to draw up a will. Then, he told me something that made my blood freeze. He said that when you read a certain piece of paper you would be able to bring him back to eternal life!"

By now, the lawyer had been so weakened by the thoughts of horror racing through his mind that he sank back in the chair and closed his eyes. Rex, always eager to get involved in some unusual adventure, took the piece of paper and said to the lawyer, "In other words, Bill, if I can make sense out of this paper I can bring my uncle back to eternal life." Rex Burton's eyes gleamed in their sockets and the lawyer thought he was looking at a mad-man.

"You can't take this seriously, Rex," blurted out Bill.

Rex had been studying the piece of paper and after a few minutes of dead silence he answered the lawyer's question with, *"I have it, Bill. I can bring my uncle back from the dead!"* With those words he wheeled around and ran out of the room.

"He's as mad as his uncle was . . . Good heavens, he's probably going to the island now. But, he can't. That whole area is being lashed by electrical storms."

Bill stared at the wall. Could this actually be happening?

A few hours later, Rex was staring at a wall. In this wall lay the body of his uncle in a coffin of stone. Rex glanced at the paper and, in the eerie light of a lone candle, raised up his arms and shouted, "I am here, uncle. *Eternity shall be yours!*"

The paper had told Rex that if he held the glass in such a way as to let the rays of a lightning bolt come through and shine upon the stone coffin, his uncle would come back to life.

The lightning flashes were coming more often now. Rex decided it was time. He pulled the coffin away from the wall and then held up the glass so that the next bolt would send its light streaming through it. The flash of lightning came and seemed to explode in the room with a blinding light. The glass caught some of this light and cast a beam on the coffin. At first, nothing happened. Then, the top of the coffin began to slide away. *Something was moving the lid!!!*

Rex stood rooted to the ground. The lightning and thunder combined to drown out the scream of the man as he saw something rise from the coffin.

Then, there was a gigantic roar and the building in which the tomb lay crumbled and crashed down the slope on which it was built. It buried the fear-shattered man and the coffin of old Burton under tons of stone. The constant beating by the storms had worn away its foundation and had sent it smashing down into the forest.

And, in between the booming of the thunder and the flashing of the lightning, the forest echoed and re-echoed with the shrill cry of some unknown being.

VOODOO VENGEANCE

BEHIND THE DEEP, CAVERNOUS EYES OF JOSHUA FLINT SMOLDERED THE SECRET FIRES OF REVENGE! JOSHUA WAS AN OLD, RETIRED SEA CAPTAIN, WISE IN THE WAYS OF THE MYSTERIES OF THE PAST! LITTLE DID HIS FRIVOLOUS YOUNG WIFE REALIZE THAT SOON SHE WOULD BE THE TARGET FOR HIS...

THAT OLD BAG OF BONES? ONCE HE'S ASLEEP HE'S LIKE A DEAD MAN! NOTHING CAN WAKE HIM. NOW, KISS ME GOOD NIGHT AGAIN, TONY...

ARE YOU SURE, SYLVIA, THAT OLD MAN'S ASLEEP? AREN'T WE TAKING DANGEROUS CHANCES?

SLEEP LIKE A DEAD MAN, EH? WELL, I'VE HEARD THAT SOMETIMES DEAD MEN CAN HAUNT THE LIVING... HEH-HEH-HEH...

IN THE FLICKERING FLAMES OF THE CANDLES THE SHADOWS FLIT ACROSS THE OLD MAN'S FACE LIKE THE HANDS OF GHOSTS! HE WAS A MAN WHO HATED MODERN THINGS, LIKE ELECTRIC LIGHTS, AND HE KEPT THE OLD VILLA ON THE ITALIAN SHORE THE WAY IT WAS FOR CENTURIES...

THAT OLD SKINFLINT IS TOO CHEAP TO PUT IN LIGHTS IN THIS TOMB! I NEVER THOUGHT HE WOULD LAST THIS LONG, TONY, WHEN I MARRIED HIM—BUT, THOSE YEARS AT SEA MADE HIM AS TOUGH AS OLD LEATHER. BUT SOME DAY, THAT BAD HEART WILL GET HIM, AND THEN EVERYTHING WILL BE MINE... ALL MINE...

SO THAT'S THE GAME! I'VE SUSPECTED IT!

DARLING!

THE IRON DOORS OF THE VILLA CLANG SHUT AS TONY LEAVES, ECHOING IN THE LONG CORRIDORS LIKE MUFFLED THUNDER, BUT, AS SYLVIA TURNS TO GO TO HER ROOM...

YOU'VE BETRAYED ME FOR THE LAST TIME, YOU VIXEN! I MAY BE OLD, BUT I'LL SHOW YOU MY HANDS STILL HAVE STRENGTH ENOUGH TO SQUEEZE THE LIFE OUT OF YOU...

(GULP) JOSHUA... WAIT... LISTEN TO (GULP) M... ME! YOU KNOW I...ONLY LOVE... YOU... (GLUG)

YOU LIE, WOMAN... YOU LIE IN THE FACE OF DEATH!! I HEARD EVERYTHING!

ARRGH! JOSH... U...A...A...A...

SLOWLY... SLOWLY THE NOOSE OF JOSHUA'S HANDS TIGHTEN! DEATH RATTLES IN HER TORTURED THROAT AS THE SIGHT OF JOSHUA'S FACE BEGINS TO FADE INTO ETERNAL DARKNESS, WHEN...

OH... AIR... AIR... I CAN BREATHE... AGAIN...

AIEEE! MY HEART... THE PAIN. ROBERTO—HELP ME! ROBERTO, WHERE ARE YOU?

WHAT'S THE MATTER, CAPTAIN? I HEARD YOU CALL FOR ME... CAPTAIN, SPEAK TO ME!

YOU'D BETTER TAKE HIM TO HIS ROOM, ROBERTO. HE'S HAD A HEART ATTACK!

THERE ARE SOME PILLS NEAR HIS BED. I'LL GIVE THEM TO HIM WHILE YOU GO FOR A DOCTOR.

NO, NO, ROBERTO. JUST PUT HIM ON THE BED. YOU RUN FOR THE DOCTOR AND I'LL TAKE CARE OF HIM...

BUT, FOR THE NEXT HALF HOUR, SYLVIA WATCHES WITH GRIM FASCINATION, THE DEATH-LIKE FACE OF HER HUSBAND. WILD HOPES SURGE THRU HER BRAIN, BUT FINALLY, HE STIRS...

MRS. FLINT, ARE YOU IN THERE? IT'S THE DOCTOR...

SYLVIA... GIVE ME THE PILLS... I *MUST* HAVE THEM... I... I'LL FORGIVE YOU... EVERYTHING...

HA-HA-HA!! HERE THEY ARE, JOSHUA. WHY DON'T YOU COME AND GET THEM! FOR A MAN WHO HAS BEEN AROUND THE WORLD MANY TIMES, IT'S SUCH A LITTLE TRIP! NOW IT'S *MY* TURN, JOSHUA... *DIE! WHY DON'T YOU DIE!*

KNOCK KNOCK

SLOWLY THE HOURS DRAG THRU THE NIGHT ON HEAVY FEET, WHILE SYLVIA PACES THE HALLWAY LIKE A CAGED TIGRESS, READY TO SPRING AT THE FIRST NEWS...

SHHH! IT WAS A NARROW SQUEAK, MRS. FLINT. HE HAD ANOTHER RELAPSE JUST AS I CAME IN. BUT HE'S GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT. HE JUST NEEDS REST NOW. WHY DON'T YOU GO TO BED. YOU LOOK TERRIBLY WORRIED, AND THERE'S NO NEED...

IF YOU SAY SO, DOCTOR.

GOOD NIGHT—AND YOU FOLLOW MY ADVICE...

HE'S GOING TO *LIVE!* OH, WHAT WILL HE DO TO ME, NOW...!

FOR THE NEXT FEW DAYS THE VILLA WAS AS SILENT AS THE INSIDE OF A BURIED CASKET AS FLINT SLOWLY REGAINED HIS STRENGTH. THEN, ONE BLEAK AFTERNOON...

GET OUT OF HERE, I SAY. CAN'T YOU LET A MAN ALONE SO HE CAN THINK! I DON'T NEED ANY MORE OF THAT BLASTED MEDICINE! AVAST!

BUT, CAPTAIN...

YES—THERE ARE SO MANY DOORS BY WHICH DEATH MAY GLIDE IN...SO MANY! BUT WHICH ONE SHALL I USE ON MY BELOVED SYLVIA? WHICH ONE WILL MAKE HER FEEL THE MOST PAIN! SHE MUST SUFFER AS I HAVE!! LET ME THINK...I REMEMBER WHEN I WAS IN HAITI FIFTY YEARS AGO...

IN THE LONELY ROOM OF THE MIND OF THE CAPTAIN SKIMS BACK HALF A CENTURY, AND HALF WAY AROUND THE WORLD...

FOR THE GOLD YOU HAVE BROUGHT ME, I WILL SHOW YOU ONE OF OUR SECRETS. THIS IS THE IMAGE OF AN ENEMY OF MINE— ***BUT I WILL DESTROY HIM!*** YOU SEE, THE DOLL IS MADE FROM HIS HAIR, HIS CLOTHES, AND I HAVE MADE IT LOOK LIKE MY ENEMY. NOW...WATCH AND LISTEN...

AND WHILE FLINT WATCHED WITH BURNING EYES, THE DRUMS BEAT IN THE HOT, MYSTERIOUS JUNGLE NIGHT LIKE THE HEART OF A GIANT...

THE BEATING DRUMS SLOWLY DIED AWAY INTO THE NIGHT, AND FOR A FEW MOMENTS, THERE WAS AN ABSOLUTE SILENCE IN THE LITTLE VILLAGE. THEN, SUDDENLY. THERE WAS A SCREAM, LIKE THE SOUND OF A DYING MONSTER, FRIGHTENING ENOUGH TO CRACK THE HEART OF A BRAVE MAN...

LOOK! SEE HOW HE SUFFERS! SOON HE WILL DIE...

AIEEEE!! MY BRAIN... HAS A DAGGER IN IT... A HOT DAGGER!

IF I DIDN'T SEE IT WITH MY OWN EYES I WOULDN'T BELIEVE IT! AND, I KNOW THE SECRET!!

AND IF IT WORKED FIFTY YEARS AGO, IT CAN WORK AGAIN! I KNOW JUST THE THINGS I'LL NEED—NAIL CLIPPINGS, WISPS OF HAIR, EYELASHES... YES, HAVE A GOOD TIME, MY DEAR, WHILE YOU CAN—HEH-HEH—WHILE YOU CAN...

YOUNG MAN, I UNDERSTAND YOU'RE AN ARTIST WHO NEEDS WORK. HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO MAKE FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS TO PAINT A PICTURE FOR ME, EH?

SIR, YOU HAVE COME TO THE RIGHT PLACE. FOR FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS I WOULD PAINT YOU *A PICTURE OF THE DEVIL HIMSELF. ENTER!*

REMEMBER WHAT I TELL YOU, CAREFULLY. YOU MUST MIX THE INGREDIENTS OF THESE ENVELOPES INTO YOUR PIGMENTS. IF YOU DON'T DO IT, I WON'T GIVE YOU A PENNY, UNDERSTAND? HERE IS HER PICTURE.

NEVER HEARD OF ANYTHING LIKE THIS BEFORE. BUT YOU'RE THE BOSS. I'LL DO IT JUST AS YOU SAY. IT WILL BE READY IN A WEEK.

MEANWHILE, SYLVIA HAS BEEN TRYING TO FORGET HER FEARS IN A MAD, PERPETUAL ROUND OF PARTIES, IGNORANT OF THE FACT THAT SHE IS HAVING HER PORTRAIT PAINTED. WITH EACH STROKE OF THE BRUSH, DOOM CLOSES IN...

THAT OLD GUY CERTAINLY IS A QUEER ONE... THIS GIRL, WHOEVER SHE IS, IS REALLY BEAUTIFUL. GOSH, I HATE TO GIVE THIS PICTURE UP—IT'S REALLY THE BEST ONE I'VE EVER DONE... IT DESERVES TO BE EXHIBITED...

WHAT TOOK YOU SO LONG? YOU SAID A WEEK—IT'S BEEN ALMOST TWO WEEKS. NO MATTER, AS LONG AS IT'S DONE. YOU'RE SURE YOU DID IT JUST AS I ORDERED, ROMERO?

OH, SURE... THAT'S RIGHT. I'M SORRY IT TOOK ME LONGER THAN I EXPECTED. WELL, HERE IT IS... FINISHED...

WITH FINGERS LIKE WRITHING SNAKES, FLINT HURRIEDLY RIPS AWAY THE WRAPPINGS, THE POISON OF REVENGE SEEPS INTO HIS BLOOD AND BRAIN, HIS HEART POUNDS LIKE A TRIP-HAMMER...

NOW YOU'LL SUFFER, SYLVIA, I'LL TWIST AND TWIST AND TWIST THIS DAGGER INTO YOUR HEART. JUST A LITTLE AT A TIME, AND I'LL HEAR YOU SCREAM WITH PAIN... IT WILL BE MUSIC TO ME! NOW...OH, MY HEART...IT COMES AGAIN...I'M TOO EXCITED...OH...

BUT, THE VERY PAIN HE WOULD INFLICT JABS MORE FORCEFULLY AT THE TIRED, OVERSTRAINED HEART OF THE OLD SEA CAPTAIN. AND, WITH A LAST, DESPERATE LUNGE...

I...I'M DYING, SYLVIA--B-BUT YOU ARE GOING TO DIE, TOO!

SEVERAL DAYS LATER...

...AND AFTER I HEARD THAT YOUR HUSBAND DIED, I FELT I SHOULD SEE YOU. PAINTING YOUR PICTURE FOR TWO WEEKS AROUSED MY CURIOSITY-I WANTED TO KNOW YOU. BUT WASN'T THAT A STRANGE WAY TO ASK TO HAVE A PICTURE PAINTED? HE SURE WAS A STRANGE CHARACTER!

YES, HE HATED ME! WHEN ROBERTO, OUR SERVANT, FOUND HIM IN HIS ROOM, HE HAD PLUNGED A KNIFE THRU THE PICTURE THAT SHOULD TELL YOU HOW VIOLENT HIS HATRED WAS! LIFE WITH HIM WAS A MISERY...AND I WAS ALWAYS SO KIND TO HIM, SO CONSIDERATE...BUT LET'S NOT TALK ABOUT WHAT'S DEAD AND BURIED...

YOU KNOW, PAINTING YOUR PICTURE WAS THE LUCKIEST THING THAT EVER HAPPENED TO EITHER OF US. YOU MUST KNOW HOW I FEEL ABOUT YOU. BUT, I HAVE SOMETHING TO CONFESS. *I NEVER GAVE YOUR HUSBAND THE ORIGINAL.* IT WAS SO GOOD I COULDN'T BEAR TO PART WITH IT, AND AS A MATTER OF FACT SOME ART CRITICS ARE COMING TO SEE IT.

HA-HA-HA! I'M GLAD YOU DIDN'T. THAT'S *A GOOD JOKE ON POOR OLD FLINT!* AND ROMERO, I HAVE A CONFESSION, TOO. I USED TO SEE A LOT OF A MAN NAMED TONY, BUT NOW, YOU'RE THE *ONLY ONE!*

YES, GENTLEMEN, I CONSIDER THIS MY MASTERPIECE. AND SHE IS AS LOVELY IN THE FLESH AS SHE IS ON CANVASS. WHAT DO YOU THINK OF IT?

HMM-A VERY FINE PIECE OF WORK, ROMERO. THE EYES NEED SOMETHING ELSE, HOWEVER. I WOULD DO SOMETHING WITH THOSE EYES.

NOTICE THE COLOR HE USED IN THE HEAD. REMARKABLE EFFECT.

THIS IS THE BEST THING I HAVE EVER SEEN YOU DO. THIS SHOWS TALENT.

MEANWHILE, SYLVIA WAS HAVING A NIGHTMARE-ONLY SHE WAS WIDE AWAKE!!

WHO'S THERE? WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH ME? THERE'S NO ONE HERE! JUST NERVES, I GUESS. AND YET I-I HAVE THE STRANGEST FEELING THAT I'M BEING WA-WATCHED... THAT PEOPLE ARE POINTING AT ME...ACCUSING ME ...SOON I'LL BE OUT OF THIS PLACE FOREVER. ROMERO WILL TAKE ME AWAY...

THE NEXT DAY WHILE ROMERO WAS WORKING ON THE PICTURE, TRYING TO PERFECT THE BEAUTY HE HAD CREATED, HIS PHONE JANGLED. HE HEARD A TORMENTED VOICE SAY...

ROMERO? THIS IS SYLVIA. A TERRIBLE THING HAS HAPPENED THIS MORNING, I SUDDENLY BEGAN TO *LOSE MY SIGHT!* EVERYTHING HAS BEEN GOING DIM. ROMERO, I'M TERRIFIED...I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO... I CAN HARDLY SEE!!

YOUR *EYES?* NOW DON'T WORRY, IT'S PROBABLY ONLY A TEMPORARY INFECTION AND...SAY, DO YOU WANT TO HEAR SOMETHING STRANGE? WHAT A COINCIDENCE!! I'VE BEEN WORKING ON THE EYES OF YOUR PICTURE ALL MORNING ...LOOK, TAKE IT EASY ...I'LL BE RIGHT OVER...

I THINK LIVING ALL ALONE IN THAT BIG PLACE IS BAD FOR SYLVIA. I'M GOING TO MARRY HER RIGHT AWAY, AND WE CAN GET OUT OF THIS CITY TOGETHER, TONIGHT...

HEY, MISTER, WATCH OUT!

BEEP!

HUH!!? WHAT?? OH, MY PICTURE...

NEVER MIND THE PICTURE, MISTER, YOU NEARLY GOT KILLED!!

CRUNCH

TENDERLY, ROMERO PICKED UP HIS MASTER-PIECE AS HE WOULD A WOUNDED BIRD. IT WAS MUTILATED ALMOST BEYOND RECOG-NITION. HEART-BROKEN, HE HURRIED TO MEET SYLVIA...

THERE SHE IS...MUST HAVE COME OVER TO MEET ME...SYLVIA, HERE I AM OVER HERE ...OH, I FORGOT ABOUT HER EYES...SHE CAN'T SEE ME...*WAIT, DON'T CROSS DON'T...THAT TRUCK!!*

I'M COMING, ROMERO... I'M CO...

NO! WAIT! WAIT!

SHE WALKED RIGHT IN FRONT OF IT! DID YOU SEE IT?

SHE MUST HAVE BEEN BLIND NOT TO SEE HIM COMING!

I'M SORRY, MISTER- BUT I KNOW THIS WASN'T MY FAULT!!

ROMERO HEARS THE VOICES AROUND HIM AS IF THEY COME FROM A GREAT DISTANCE. HE ONLY THINKS ABOUT THE UNRECOGNIZABLE, CRUSHED GIRL IN HIS ARMS, THE SMASHED PICTURE BESIDE HIM, AND HE TRIES TO UNDERSTAND...

The Fatal Bullet

The battle had been furious. All over the battleground lay strewn the results of war-broken and twisted bodies, smashed cannon and red smeared mud. It was the Civil War and in this struggle, the North had been victorious with the battered Southern legions trying to stagger back to the safety of their lines by Richmond.

Two Northern soldiers were sprawled on the ground behind a shattered farmhouse trying to get some rest before their unit was called into battle again. "Aye, Jack. That last one was a hard one. A shell just missed me," muttered one of the soldiers as he felt the top of his head.

"I almost . . ." The second soldier's voice trailed off as his eyes saw a crow hovering above. "Look, Tim. Look at that crow up there." Both men watched the black bird circle around and around. Then, Jack jumped to his feet and began shouting.

"Tim, that's the 'Old Witch'."

The other soldier gasped and then agreed. Both men had come from the same town and the people of this town took pleasure in taunting an old lady who they thought was a witch. The townspeople believed that the old lady could change herself into a crow.

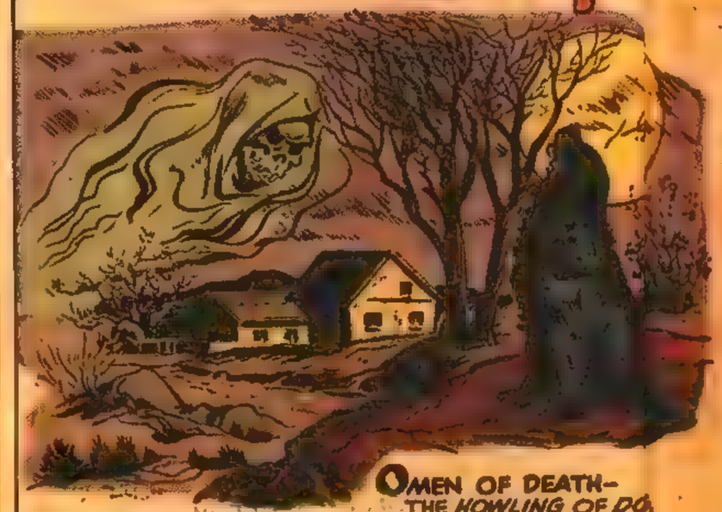
Tim was now on his feet and the two soldiers were throwing rocks and sticks at the bird. Then, the men brought their muskets into play but still the crow flew around and around. "It wants us to die," snarled Jack.

"You mean 'she' wants us to die," answered Tim, taking a bead on the crow. Try as they might they could not bring the crow down. Finally they stopped shooting and sat down to watch the black speck in the sky.

Suddenly Tim's eyes lighted up. "Jack, I know what can kill that thing. *Silver!* I remember my mother telling me that silver could kill a witch!" Quickly, the two soldiers cut the silver buttons off their uniforms and placed them into their guns. Tim took aim. He fired. The crow's leg cracked in two as the button smashed into it. Jack took aim. He fired. The crow plummeted to the earth—dead. With yells of glee, the two soldiers kicked the dead bird into some nearby bushes.

Several years passed and the Civil War ended. The two soldiers returned to their home and were informed that the "Old Witch" was dead. "How did it happen?" asked Tim and Jack. The answer froze the blood in their veins. Strangely enough, the old lady had broken a leg just about the time the two soldiers had their experience with the crow. And, after a long illness, she died. Later, when they examined her body for witch traces they found a silver button in her leg that could not be explained!

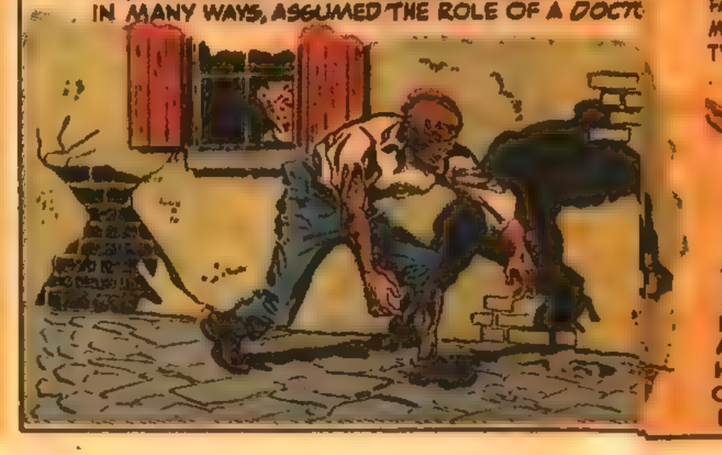
Strange Superstitions



OMEN OF DEATH— THE *HOWLING OF DO*, THE *LOWING OF CATTLE*, AND THE *CROWING ROOSTERS* AT NIGHT, ARE SUPPOSED TO *FORELL* THE *DEATH* OF A PERSON AS THESE ANIMALS ARE SAID TO BE ABLE TO SEE *DEATH* ENTER THE HOME OF THE *DOOMED* ONE.

MAGICAL INFLUENCE— WHEN THE *OJIBWA INDIAN* WANTS TO BRING *SICKNESS* TO THE BODY OF AN *ENEMY*, HE MAKES A SMALL WOODEN *IMAGE* OF THE PERSON AND *PIERCES* ITS *HEAD* AND *HEART* WITH *NEEDLES*, BELIEVING THAT HIS ENEMY WILL EXPERIENCE THE SAME FATE. IF THE PURPOSE IS *TO KILL*, THE *IMAGE* IS *BURNED*.

WITCHES MANY PEOPLE THINK OF A *WITCH* AS A PERSON OF *EVIL*. BUT, FOR MANY CENTURIES, THEY WERE CALLED UPON TO RELIEVE THE *MISFORTUNES* OF *ILLNESSES*, *CHILDBIRTH*, AND IN MANY WAYS, ASSUMED THE ROLE OF A *DOCTO*



TABOOS ALL OVER THE WORLD, *KNOTS* ARE CONSIDERED OBJECTIONABLE. THE *PARLIAMENT OF BORDEAUX*, IN 1718, HAD A PERSON *BURNED* ALIVE FOR CAUSING THE *RUIN* OF A FAMILY BY MEANS OF TYING *KNOTS*.

THE WEREWOLF "SKIN CHANGER" AND "TURN COAT" WERE TERMS USE BY THE *ROMANS* TO DESCRIBE THE *WEREWOLF*. DURING THE *MEDIEVAL AGES* PEOPLE BELIEVED THAT WHILE THE *WEREWOLF* WAS IN HIS *HUMAN FORM* HIS *HAIR* GREW *INWARDS*, AND WHEN HE CHANGED INTO A *WOLF* HE JUST *TURNED* HIMSELF *INSIDE OUT*.

THE CURSED DIAMONDS

"Them stupid savages won't get wise that we stole their tribe's sacred diamonds for a week. We'll be far away by then." The leader of the gang stood up after he spoke and went to the window. "I wonder, though," he continued, "what that medicine man who was guarding the glass meant before we bumped him?"

One of the two seated men hesitatingly said, "When that guy said, 'On the bones of two will come death to the third,' I almost fell apart."

The three thieves retired for the night and the jungle seemed to go to sleep, too. Suddenly, everything seemed to hold its breath. There wasn't a sound. Then, a sound like paper being crunched was heard.

One of the men could not sleep and rose, going to the window. He recoiled in horror as, in the bright moonlight, he saw thousands and thousands of red, man-eating army ants surrounding the hut below and slowly closing in!

With the man's first screams, the other men were on their feet. Soon, they, too, saw the ants. The leader snapped his men out of their trance of horror and set about to stop the red horde. Since the ants were still some distance away and the hut was once a mining camp storehouse, they had enough time and equipment to build a moat around the house. Into the moat, the fright-crazed crooks poured oil which they set afire.

Over and over again the ants tried to breach the river of fire. Each time the attempts were foiled as the burning oil ate into their ranks. Then, the men looked at each other as they realized that they had no more oil!

With a shriek of madness, the leader pulled out his gun and began to fire into the ants. Then, a mad plan entered his brain. If he killed his men and threw their bodies to the ants they might leave him alone. The jungle night air was shattered by two shots. Smoking gun in hand, the mad leader stood over his men, grinning.

Picking the bodies up, he hurled them at the army of ants which was still trying to get across the moat. As the bodies hit the swarming mass, the dancing flames shimmering on the greasy red coats, there was a sizzling sound. Thousands of small jaws were closing on human flesh!

The leader laughed, thinking the ants would leave. They didn't. Instead the ants cleaned all the flesh off the bones of the dead men and then began to carry the bones to the edge of the moat. Soon, the oil burned lower and the ants pushed some of the bones into the moat. Using this as a foundation, they built a bridge of human bones!

The man stumbled back into the hut. As he did, his hand touched the pile of diamonds on the table. He remembered the medicine man's propheay.

He felt the ants crawling up his legs!

September 16, 1852, found the whaling schooner "Eagle" picking its way slowly between towering walls of ice that threatened any moment to come crashing down and crush the stout ship like an eggshell. The catch had been very good and Captain Marlowe thought that some time might be spent in exploring the area of ice that seemed to rise out of the water suddenly and stretch without a break until the eye lost it beyond the rim of the horizon. A two-day probing revealed a small gap in the ice and the "Eagle" gently slid into it as a fly between the legs of an elephant.

As the ship glided into a wider straight, its white sails became grey against the glistening white walls of the bergs. Then, as if some gigantic hands had ripped them apart, the barriers of ice split with a thundering roar and gave up a captive that made the men on the "Eagle" clutch the rails for support. Revealed before them was a boat, sheeted with ice and snow. Its rigging was fallen; its sails were in shreds, held together by jagged hooks of ice; and its hull was battered and broken. But, that wasn't all. Also, released from the grip of the ice king were human beings, frozen in the likeness they had when the ice first claimed them!!!

Finally, the hardy whaling men reclaimed their courage and went aboard the wrecked schooner. Captain Marlowe led the boarding party. "Easy, lads. This deck isn't what it once was. Watch you don't step through the flocr and say hello to Davy." The men mumbled their "Aye, aye, sirs," as their eyes focused on a sight that would live with them for the rest of their lives.

As they looked about the deck, the men saw frozen corpses. Standing by some rigging, three sailors were still in the motion of pulling in line. Towards the back of the ship, two other frozen actors on this stage of death were leaning over the rail and seemed to be watching the blue spray dot the sides of the boat. When the scouting party went below, they saw more men—some asleep in their bunks, others sitting around a table. In the captain's quarters, a body, dressed in uniform, sat upright, a pen in its right hand.

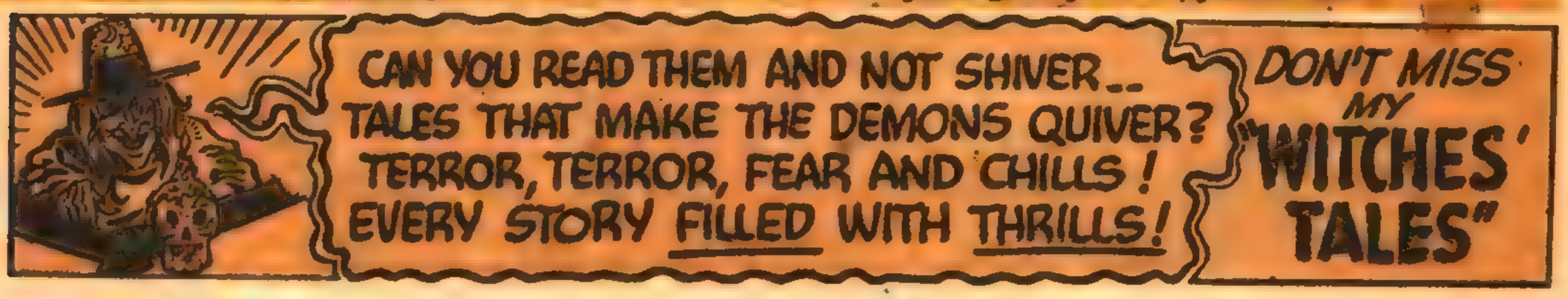
"Heave to, men. We've got work to do. We've got to give these men a decent burial." The captain's words broke the trance that had gripped the men and they quickly scrambled to the deck. On board his own ship, Captain Marlowe decided the best way to free the corpses from their coffins of ice would be to use boiling water. Rapidly, his orders were obeyed and, soon, a large kettle of boiling water was ready. Then, the corpses were carried aboard. One by one, they were dipped into the steaming water. When the job was done, the bodies lay, pale and blue, on the deck. As the first mate turned to Captain Marlowe for further instructions, his hair bristled with fear. One of the corpses was moving!!!

The mate drew back and, as he did, the other men saw what was terrifying him and they, too, began to move back. Eyes, mirroring horror, watched the corpses come back to life and stand up. Then, as if the bottom of the ship had opened up and let in all the demons of the underworld, the frigid air was shattered by bloodcurdling yells. The corpses were attacking the crew of the "Eagle!" The fear and the surprise was so great that, in a few minutes, the corpses were able to kill every man on board except Captain Marlowe who had jumped overboard and hidden under a huge slab of ice.

As Captain Marlowe watched, he saw the "bodies" take the murdered crew and place them in the identical positions that they were in only a short time before. Then, he heard a wail that froze his blood colder than the ice about him. The corpses discovered that he was missing. But, it seemed they did not have time to search for the captain and instead, re-boarded the "Eagle" and began to sail her away!!! Captain Marlowe gasped!

What was all of this about? He had seen a dead crew come back to life, kill his crew and then sail away on his boat. Was it possible that such a thing had been going on over and over again? Was it possible that his crew would come to life someday? As Captain Marlowe's mind filled with fear, his eurs caught the rumbling of crashing ice. He looked up and saw the ice walls crumbling down on the ship and himself!!!

The walls of the passageway were closing up again. They had revealed their secret too long. As the tons of ice crashed down, the ice floating on the water seemed to rise up to meet them. The slab on which Captain Marlowe had taken refuge was hurled upward and the Captain was thrown on to the deck of his ship, dead with a broken back. With a dying rumble the ice settled and the birds flying over head could never tell that a passageway once opened there.


CAN YOU READ THEM AND NOT SHIVER...
TALES THAT MAKE THE DEMONS QUIVER?
TERROR, TERROR, FEAR AND CHILLS!
EVERY STORY FILLED WITH THRILLS!
DON'T MISS MY "WITCHES' TALES"

AYE! I WAS ONLY A *LAD* THEN, BUT IF I LIVE *100 YEARS*, I'LL *NEVER* FORGET *THE BLACK SWAN*... A SHIP WITH A *CURSE* ON HER FROM THE MOMENT SHE WENT *DOWN* THE WAYS! NOT MANY MEN *LIVE* TO TELL WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THEY *SAIL* A SHIP THAT WAS...

Launched in Blood

WHAT'S THE *OLD GUY* MUMBLING ABOUT, *DANE*? I'VE SEEN HIM BEFORE IN HERE, ALWAYS SITTING *ALONE*. WHO IS HE?

THAT BE *EBEN DARK*, A MAN WHO'S SAILED THE SALTY WAVES OF THE SEVEN SEAS ABOARD THE WHALERS. IT'S *GHOSTS* HE'S TALKING TO! DO YE MEAN YOU *NEVER* HEARD HIS *TALE*?!

DEVIL TAKE YE FOR A *PLAGUED* SHIP... I'LL HAVE NO MORE THOUGHTS OF YE, YE *DEATH INFESTED* HULK...

EBEN, THIS HERE'S MY SHIPMATE. HE NEVER HEARD OF THE *BLACK SWAN*, AND HE *WANTS* TO KNOW ABOUT HER. C'MON, *EBEN*, *TELL* US YOUR TALE, AND I'LL KEEP YOUR WHISTLE WET WHILE YOU DO!

THE *BLACK SWAN*... NEVER SAILED SO *EVIL* A SHIP... THE WAVES WERE RED WITH THE *BLOOD* OF HER MEN...

THEY *WANTED* ME TO *TELL* IT *AGAIN*. THE *STORY* I'VE BEEN TRYING TO *FORGET* THESE *THIRTY YEARS!* BUT MEN ALWAYS WANT TO HEAR ABOUT THE *BLACK SWAN*...

C'MON NOW, *EBEN*, THIS LAD WILL NEVER BE A TRUE SAILOR 'TIL HE'S HEARD THE *TALE* FROM YOU... AND AFTER ALL, *WHO'S LEFT* TO TELL IT! THREE OVER HERE!

AYE! NONE LEFT BUT OLD *EBEN DARK*, AND A CANVAS SHROUD AND THE *DARK* WAVES WILL SOON HAVE HIM *TOO!* I'LL TELL IT TO YE, 'CAUSE I'LL NOT TELL IT *MANY* MORE TIMES BEFORE THE *SEA* WILL *SEAL* MY LIPS!

I REMEMBER THE DAY I FIRST SAW HER. I WAS STANDING IN THE CROWD WITH MY UNCLE WATCHING THE *CEREMONY*...

...AND NOW, THE *GOVERNOR'S WIFE* IS GOING TO SEND THIS PROUD SHIP *DOWN* THE WAYS, A SHIP THAT I KNOW IS GOING TO BRING *PROSPERITY* TO OUR TOWN. ARE YOU READY, MADAME ...READY, *CAPTAIN JONES*?

I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR *WEEKS* TO TAKE HER TO SEA!

I AM *READY*.

The Black Swan

I NOW *CHRISTEN* THEE *THE BLACK SWAN!*

WAIT...NOT YET! JIM IS STILL *DOWN* THERE, GREASING THE WOOD! *HOLD THE SHIP!!*

WHAT?!? DO YOU MEAN...? HOLD *THE SHIP!*

IT'S TOO LATE! HE'LL BE *KILLED!* SHE'S STARTED TO SLIDE!

IT'S TOO *HORRIBLE!* I CAN'T LOOK...

HE'S A *GONER!*

POOR *DEVIL*, HE NEVER HAD A CHANCE!!

LOOK, HIS *BLOOD* IS GREASING THAT SHIP TO THE WATER!

NO!! *NO!* AGGH-HHH HH!!

THERE WAS AN *AWFUL* MOMENT OF *DEAD* SILENCE WHEN THE *SCREAMS* STOPPED, AND I COULD FEEL THE *BLOOD* RUN *COLD* IN MY VEINS WHEN LATER I HEARD THE MEN TALKING. MY UNCLE, *CAPTAIN DARK*, *TIGHTENED* HIS FINGERS ON MY SHOULDER...

THIS IS A *TERRIBLE* THING AND A *BAD* SIGN! THAT SHIP IS LIKE A *CASKET*, MADE TO HOLD *DEATH!* I'LL SAIL NO SHIP THAT IS *LAUNCHED IN BLOOD!* AND YOU'LL *NOT* FIND A CAPTAIN IN THESE PARTS THAT'LL SAIL HER FOR YOU!!

BUT, *CAPTAIN*, THAT'S *SILLY!* EVERYONE SAW IT WAS AN *ACCIDENT*. THIS IS NOTHING BUT FOOLISH *SUPERSTITION* ON YOUR PART!

ISN'T THERE A *MAN* AMONG YOU WHO WILL *CAPTAIN* THIS SHIP!? WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU? LOOK- I...I'LL GET THE COMPANY TO *DOUBLE* THE PAY FOR THE FIRST VOYAGE... *HEY*, WHO SAID THAT?

I'LL NOT SAIL THAT BLOOD STAINED BARK FOR TRIPLE PAY!

SHE'S A MARKED SHIP! *NOTHING* GOOD CAN COME OF HER!

A MAN WOULD HAVE TO BE A *FOOL*, OR THE *DEVIL* HIMSELF TO SAIL HER.

I'LL *SAIL* THAT SHIP FOR YOU! A LITTLE *BLOOD* NEVER FRIGHTENED *CAPTAIN DARK!* COME ALONG, EBEN!

I FOLLOWED MY UNCLE THRU THE CROWD, AND I COULD FEEL A SCORE OF *HOSTILE EYES* BURNING IN OUR BACKS...

YOU SAY YOU'LL DO IT? CAN YOU GET A *CREW?*

AYE! OFFER *DOUBLE* PAY FOR THE CREW, AND I'LL HAVE ONE FOR YOU BY MORNING. THERE'S MEN WHO'LL SAIL A BATHTUB TO THE *GATES* OF *HELL* FOR *DOUBLE PAY!*

LOOK YE! I'VE ALREADY GOT A *CABIN BOY-* EH, *EBEN?*

Y-YES, *SIR!*

I WAS ONLY A LAD OF FIFTEEN, AND MY UNCLE WAS MY GUARDIAN AFTER MY PARENTS DIED. THIS WAS MY *FIRST* VOYAGE, TOO. DURING THAT NIGHT, MY UNCLE GATHERED A CREW, AND EARLY THE NEXT MORNING, WHEN I AWOKE, THEY WERE *ABOARD...*

NOW, YE SWABS - LISTEN TO ME! THEY SAY THIS IS A *CURSED* SHIP BECAUSE SHE'S KILLED A MAN! I SAY SHE'S SOUND AS A DOLLAR, AND WE'LL BRING HOME A FULL CARGO! IF THERE'S A *LILY-LIVERED* MAN AMONG YE, NOW'S THE TIME TO GET ASHORE! IF NOT, THEN LET'S WEIGH ANCHOR.

AYE-AYE, CAPTAIN!

HEAVE TO, ME HEARTIES.

SO WE SAILED OUT ACROSS THE *NORTH ATLANTIC*, AND THE SEA WAS GENTLE AND PLAYFUL AS A KITTEN, AND THE SUN SHONE LIKE A GOLD PIECE. FOR A WHILE ALL WENT WELL... THEN, ONE MORNING...

WHALE HO! AHOY BELOW! CALL THE CAPTAIN. WHALE OFF THE STARBOARD BOW! *THAR SHE BLOWS!*

CAPTAIN, THE GLASS IS FALLING. LOOKS LIKE A *STORM* IS BREWING. DON'T YOU THINK WE OUGHT TO PLAY IT *SAFE* AND LET THIS ONE GO?

NOT ON YOUR LIFE, *GRANGER!* WE CAN TAKE HIM BEFORE THE STORM BREAKS, AND HE'S A *BIG 'UN.* I'M NOT GOING TO LOSE HIM! *MAN THE BOAT* AND YOU TAKE IT OUT!

DON'T WORRY, I'LL KEEP AN EYE ON THE WEATHER, AND PICK YOU UP IF THE STORM BREAKS. NOW, *CAST OFF!*

AYE-AYE, SIR. MAN THE OARS MEN AND *PULL!*

I DON'T LIKE THE LOOK OF THE SKY!

UGH! THERE --GOT 'EM!

PULL *HARD* TO PORT, BOYS! THE *DEVIL* IS HEADED *STRAIGHT* FOR US!

WE SAW WHAT HAPPENED FROM THE DECK OF THE SHIP AND A *GROAN* WENT UP AMONG THE MEN AS THEY WATCHED THEIR SHIPMATES *THROWN* INTO THE *BOILING SEA!* AND THEN, LIKE A DIRGE, THE WIND BEGAN TO *HOWL* IN THE RIGGING...

HEAD FOR THE SHIP, MEN! IT'S OUR ONLY CHANCE! THE CAPTAIN WILL PICK US UP!

YEOW!

SWIM FOR YOUR LIVES!

THE STORM BROKE AND THE SEA RAGED LIKE A MOUNTAIN LION! I HAD ALL I COULD DO TO HOLD ON TO THE LINES TO KEEP FROM GOING OVERBOARD! BUT, THRU THE RAIN, I COULD SEE MY UNCLE, STANDING LIKE A ROCK...

CAPTAIN, YOU MUST SAVE THEM! LISTEN, THEY'RE CALLING! MY BROTHER'S OUT THERE!!

CAPTAINNN... GLUG...! HELP!! WE'RE DROWNING... GLUG...

GET DOWN BELOW, YOU FOOL! WE CAN'T SAVE THEM. THEY'RE ALL DROWNED BY NOW! IT'S NOTHING BUT THE WIND YOU HEAR! I'M NOT GOING TO RISK THIS SHIP TO PICK UP DEAD BODIES!

YOU... YOU FIEND! YOU'RE LETTING THEM DIE! YOU CAN'T LIVE AND DO THIS! YOU... OHHH...

CONFOUND YOU! I'LL TEACH YOU TO FOLLOW ORDERS!

BLAM

I STOOD PETRIFIED WITH HORROR AT WHAT I SAW. THEN, FINALLY, I RAN FORWARD CRYING...

UNCLE... UNCLE! NO, DON'T!

SO IT'S YOU! IF EVER YOU BREATHE A WORD OF THIS THE SAME THING'LL HAPPEN TO YOU SOME DARK NIGHT. DO YE HEAR, BOY! I HAD TO KILL HIM... SELF DEFENSE!

Y-YES, UNCLE... I... I WON'T SAY A WORD. YOU HAD TO K-K-KILL HIM!

THE NEXT DAY WAS CALM, AND WE HAD FUNERAL SERVICES FOR THE MEN THAT WERE "LOST" DURING THE STORM. BUT, SOMETHING HAPPENED THAT CHILLED ALL OF US TO THE BONE MORE THAN A NORTH WIND...

...AND WE PRAY THAT THE MEN WHO WERE LOST WILL FIND PEACE AT LAST, AS WELL AS TIM LANE'S BROTHER, JOHN, WHO WAS WASHED OVERBOARD LAST NIGHT DURING THE STORM, AND...

SAM, DID YOU HEAR SOMETHING?

I THOUGHT I DID BUT IT CAN'T BE!!

HELP, CAPTAIN - SAVE US - HELP

AVAST! WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU MEN? GETTING CHICKEN HEARTED ARE YE? A LITTLE WIND IN THE SAILS AND YE THINK YE HEAR THE VOICES OF THE DEAD! STAND STILL! THE NEXT MAN THAT MOVES WILL JOIN HIS SHIPMATES!

THERE... THERE'S NO ONE DOWN THERE! I COULD HAVE SWORN I HEARD GRANGER!

MAYBE THE CAPTAIN'S RIGHT. THE WIND'S PLAYING TRICKS WITH OUR EARS AND IMAGINATIONS...

DURING THE NEXT FEW WEEKS THERE WERE *DARK SCOWLS* AND *WORDS* AMONG THE CREW. SURELY, WE SEEMED *CURSED*, FOR NOT ONE WHALE DID WE SEE THE WHOLE TIME! THEN, ONE NIGHT...

CAPTAIN, BEGGING YOUR PARDON, SIR, BUT I THOUGHT IT BEST I HAVE A WORD WITH YE. THE CREW IS THINKING OF MUTINY! THEY'RE *AFRAID* OF THIS SHIP. THEY WANT TO GO HOME. THEY HEAR VOICES AT NIGHT. MOST OF 'EM ARE AGAINST YOU, CAPTAIN.

BLAST THE LOT OF THEM FOR A BUNCH OF SPINELESS *JELLYFISH!* VOICES! *PAH!* I'LL MAKE 'EM HEAR THE WHISTLE OF A *LASH* ON THEIR BACKS! BUT MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT, *SIMPSON*... THERE ARE TO MANY OF THEM FOR SO *FEW* OF US!!

SO, CAPTAIN, I SEE YOU'RE SAFELY HOME AFTER ALL. SUCH NONSENSE THAT SUPER-STITION. HOW MANY WHALES DID YOU TAKE?

DEVIL TAKE THE LUCK, NOT A ONE! BUT DON'T YOU WORRY, AS SOON AS WE CAN GET ANOTHER CREW, WE'LL SET SAIL AND MAKE UP FOR IT!

MAY I NEVER HAVE THE *BAD* LUCK TO SEE YE AGAIN, *BLACK SWAN!*

AYE, MAY SHE ROT IN *DAVY JONES' LOCKER.*

BUT THE DAYS PASSED AND HARDLY A MAN WANTED TO SAIL THE *'BLACK SWAN.* SHE ALREADY HAD A REPUTATION FOR *DEATH*, AND NOW IT WAS CLAIMED SHE WAS *HAUNTED!* BUT, ONE NIGHT...

THEY'RE A *MEANLOT, CAPTAIN DARK,* BUT I GUESS YOU'RE THE MAN WHO CAN HANDLE THEM! YOU CAN HAVE THIS LOT OF *CUT-THROATS,* CHEAP!

HERE'S YOUR MONEY, JAILOR! A LITTLE SEA VOYAGE IS JUST WHAT THESE MEN NEED FOR THEIR *HEALTH!*

GOOD LUCK, CAPTAIN. SAY, WHERE IN THE *WORLD* DID YOU MANAGE TO GET THAT CREW?

DON'T YOU WORRY. EVERY ONE OF THEM IS *HAND PICKED.* THEY'LL BRING HOME *WHALE* TO YOU. THEY KNOW HOW TO *KILL!*

YES, EVERY-ONE OF THEM IS A *MURDERER!* I WONDER IF I'LL EVER SEE LAND *AGAIN?*

...BUT WE HADN'T BEEN AT SEA MORE THAN A FEW DAYS WHEN *TROUBLE* BEGAN...

TEN MORE LASHES FOR THIS LYING *DOG*, MATE! I'LL HAVE NO MORE TALK ABOUT THIS BEING A *HAUNTED SHIP*, D'YE HEAR? VOICES IN THE NIGHT! MAYBE *THIS* WILL TUNE UP YOUR EARS!

AYE, CAPTAIN!

YOWAR RRGG!!

WHISH

THEN, ONE WINTER EVENING WHEN THE FOG HUNG OVER THE SEA LIKE A *WHITE SHROUD*, AND THE ICICLES HUNG DOWN LIKE THE *TEETH OF MONSTERS*, A PECULIAR THING HAPPENED...

TAKE IT FROM ME, MATEY, THIS IS A *DOOMED SHIP!* I KNOW IT!

MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT, FRIEND. AIN'T BEEN NOTHING BUT *DIRTY WEATHER* AND LASHINGS SINCE WE CAME ABOARD!

HELLO, JACK. I THOUGHT I HEARD YOU TALKING TO SOMEONE.

WHY, THAT I WAS, EBEN. FELLOW I HADN'T NOTICED ON BOARD BEFORE. VERY FRIENDLY CHAP HE IS TOO. LET ME INTRODUCE YOU. HIS NAME'S GRANGER! WHY... HE'S GONE!

JACK, YOU... YOU MUST BE SEEING THINGS THAT DON'T EXIST IN THIS FOG. THERE'S NO MAN BY THAT NAME ABOARD SHIP. HE WAS THE MATE WHO WAS LOST ON THE LAST VOYAGE. HE'S DEAD!

HUH??? BUT I SAW HIM... HE WAS STANDING RIGHT HERE... HE PUT HIS WET HAND... ON.. MINE... OH, NOOO!

JACK STARTED RUNNING DOWN THE ICE COVERED DECK LIKE A MADMAN. I TRIED TO STOP HIM, BUT...

JACK, COME BACK! DON'T RUN ON THIS DECK!

I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE... I'VE GOT TO... NO... NO! DON'T DO IT! DON'T! AHHHHH...

SPLASH

YES, I HEARD JACK GO OVER THE SIDE. HE MUST HAVE SUNK LIKE A STONE IN THAT FREEZING WATER! I TRIED TO MAKE MY EYES SEE THRU THE BLACKNESS, BUT IT WAS NO USE. ALL I COULD DO WAS HOLLER...

MAN OVERBOARD... MAN OVERBOARD!

SEVERAL DAYS LATER, WE FINALLY SIGHTED A WHALE. I WAS SO TIRED OF BEING ABOARD THE BLACK SWAN THAT I CONVINCED UNCLE TO LET ME GO AFTER IT WITH THE MEN...

WHALE HO!!

COME ON, YOU LUNKHEADS! GET THAT BOAT OVER THE SIDE! LET'S GO, EBEN! I'M TAKING NO CHANCES ON THIS ONE! I'M GOING TO SPEAR THAT WHALE MYSELF!

LOOK!! THOSE THINGS GOING UP THE ROPES!

NO... THIS ...THIS C-CAN'T B-BE!

C'MON, MEN—HERE'S THE BLACK SWAN. WE'RE SAVED NOW... WE'VE GOT OUR SHIP BACK!

WE STOOD SPEECHLESS WITH TERROR, WATCHING THE HORRORS ON BOARD, OUR MINDS REFUSING TO BELIEVE WHAT OUR EYES SAW...

ARRGGGHH!

KEEP AWAY FROM ME, YOU FIEND!!

HAW HAW!

OVER THE SIDE! THEY'RE TAKING OVER!

GANG WAY!

AVENGE US, YOU SPIRITS OF THE DEEP! SEND THE MIGHTY WHALE AFTER THE MAN WHO DESERTED US!

WATCH OUT! THE WHALE IS ATTACKING US!!

THE MIGHTY MONSTER LOOMED UP IN FRONT OF US LIKE A BLACK MOUNTAIN, AND THEN SMASHED INTO US! I WAS KNOCKED HIGH IN THE AIR, SPINNING, NOT KNOWING WHICH WAS THE SKY OR THE SEA...

HELP!

YOW!

SAVE ME!

I THOUGHT MY LUNGS WOULD BURST BEFORE I WAS ABLE TO FIGHT CLEAR OF THE TONS OF WATER THAT HAD CRASHED DOWN ON US. I WAS JUST BARELY ABLE TO REACH A FLOATING TIMBER...

EBEN, HELP... (GASP) ME... HELP YOUR POOR OLD UNCLE... (GASP)!

I CAN'T... UNCLE... I'M... TOO WEAK...

I LOOKED AROUND AND THERE WAS NO ONE LEFT ALIVE FROM OUR CREW, ONLY MYSELF! IN THE DISTANCE I SAW THE BLACK SWAN SAILING WAY, SPREADING HER SAIL IN THE WIND, AND ACROSS THE WATER I THOUGHT I HEARD THIN, FAMILIAR VOICES!

WE'VE BEEN AVENGED, TIM. LET'S AWAY!

AYE, AYE, CAPTAIN GRANGER!!

GURGLE

YES, I WATCHED IT SAIL AWAY 'TIL IT WAS A BLACK SPECK ON THE HORIZON. AND THAT'S THE LAST ANYONE'S EVER SEEN OR HEARD OF THE BLACK SWAN! NEXT DAY I WAS PICKED UP, THE ONLY SURVIVOR. BUT SOON, OLD EBEN WILL BE SAILING THE BLACK SWAN AGAIN... SOMETIMES ON QUIET NIGHTS, I HEAR THEM CALLING... CALLING...

THANKS, OLD TIMER, FOR TELLING MY FRIEND THE STORY... HERE, MAYBE THIS WILL HELP YOU GET RID OF THOSE VOICES!

LET'S GO, DANE. I'VE HAD ENOUGH FOR ONE NIGHT!

The End.

STRANGE LEGENDS

ETCHED IN TIME, THE LEGENDS OF THE WORLD HAVE LONG AMAZED THOSE WHO HAVE HEARD OF THEM. SUCH IS THE LEGEND OF "MAUSHOPE-THE DYING SMOKER."

MANY MOONS AGO, WHEN OUR COUNTRY WAS THE FATHER OF GREAT FORESTS AND THE KEEPER OF WILD BEAUTY, THERE LIVED THE GREAT INDIAN HUNTER-*MAUSHOPE*-KNOWN FOR HIS KINDNESS AND STRENGTH.

THEN, EVIL BEFELL THE INDIANS OF THE NORTHWEST IN THE FORM OF A MURDERING EAGLE WHICH SWOOPED DOWN AND CARRIED AWAY THE *CHILDREN!*

MAUSHOPE THE INDIAN GIANT, BECAME SO ENRAGED THAT HIS ROAR OF ANGER SHOOK THE HIGHEST BRANCH OF THE TALLEST TREE. GRABBING HIS SPEAR, *MAUSHOPE* BEGAN TO WADE ACROSS A LARGE BAY TOWARDS THE ISLAND WHERE THE PLUNDERING EAGLE LIVED!

THE EAGLE SAW THE MIGHTY INDIAN WARRIOR COMING TO ITS ISLAND AND... WITH A SCREECH OF CHALLENGE... IT CHARGED *MAUSHOPE!!*

THE FIGHT BETWEEN *MAUSHOPE* AND THE EAGLE MADE THE SUN HIDE AND THE WIND CEASE TO BLOW-SO FIERCE WAS IT FOUGHT! UP AND DOWN THE BAY THEY BATTLED!!

FINALLY, *MAUSHOPE'S* SPEAR PLUNGED TO ITS MARK AND THE EAGLE FELL, THE SPEAR QUIVERING THROUGH ITS HEART. BUT *MAUSHOPE* HAD A GREAT MANY WOUNDS AND WAS *DYING*. SO, HE STAGGERED TO TO THE SHORE, LAY AGAINST A TREE AND SMOKED HIS LAST PIPE.

WHEN THE OTHER INDIANS CAME TO THE ISLAND, THEY FOUND THEIR CHILDREN *SAFE*, BUT *MAUSHOPE...DEAD!* NOW, WHEN A FOG RISES OVER THE BAY, THE INDIANS SAY, "IT IS *MAUSHOPE SMOKING HIS LAST PIPE!*"

ROD FANCHER THOUGHT HE HAD EVERY ANGLE FIGURED...THAT *HE* COULD MAKE CRIME PAY! THERE WERE NO HOLES IN HIS AIR-TIGHT PLAN..EXCEPT THE ONE THEY PUT THE CORPSE INTO! THAT WAS THE ONE HE FORGOT TO COVER, AND HE FOUND OUT THAT SOMETIMES...

THE DEAD WON'T DIE

YOU'LL NEVER GET AWAY WITH THIS, DO YOU HEAR ME? I'LL SEE THAT YOU'RE TRACKED DOWN IF IT'S THE LAST THING I EVER DO!

RAVE ON, SUCKER! MAYBE THIS'LL TEACH YOU NOT TO CARRY SO MUCH AROUND WITH YOU LATE AT NIGHT!

I'LL SEE THAT.. UGH! YOU P..PAY... UHHHHHH!

YOU FOOL! NO ONE OUTDRAWS A POINTED GUN.

HURRY, ROD! I'VE GOT THE MOTOR RUNNING!

MOVE OVER, MAY! I BETTER DRIVE NOW.

B-R-R-R-R-R-I-N-G!

CANDY SODA

ROD, WHAT HAPPENED? I GOT SO WORRIED WHEN YOU WEREN'T BACK ON TIME.. AND THEN, WHEN I HEARD THOSE SHOTS, I WAS TERRIFIED!

I HAD TO PLUG HIM, HONEY.. BUT I GOT THE MONEY! ONLY THING I CAN'T FIGURE IS WHO SET THAT ALARM OFF! WELSH IS AS DEAD AS ANYBODY CAN BE! GOTTA STEP ON IT!

ROD SENT THE CAR SCREAMING THRU THE NIGHT, DRIVING AS IF CHASED BY DEMONS! A LITTLE WHILE LATER, IN A SMALL CAFÉ...

NOW, THE BEST THING TO DO IS SPLIT UP, MAY. YOU TAKE THIS DOUGH AND GO UP TO THE HIDEOUT BY TRAIN. I'LL MEET YOU THERE AS SOON AS I CAN. THEY'LL NEVER FIND US IN THOSE VERMONT HILLS!

OKAY, ROD.. ANY-THING YOU SAY.

I'LL BE GLAD WHEN WE'RE FAR AWAY FROM THIS CITY MY-SELF. SAY, ROD, WHAT'S THE TROUBLE? YOU'RE AS JUMPY AS A RABBIT!

NOTHING... NOTHING AT ALL, BABY. I.. I JUST FELT AS IF SOME-ONE WAS...NO, IT ISN'T ANYTHING.. NERVES I GUESS!

I'D RATHER BE GOING WITH YOU, BUT I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT ABOUT THIS. SOMEONE MIGHT'VE SEEN US TOGETHER AT THE GETAWAY. BE CARE FUL, ROD. THERE'S A HEAVY FOG ROLLING IN TONIGHT.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME, BABY. SOMEHOW I FEEL THIS IS SAFER. YOU KNOW HOW I GET FEEL-INGS ABOUT THINGS... SEE YOU SOON!

AS ROD ROARS AWAY INTO THE MURKY NIGHT, THE FOG SLIDES OVER THE CAR SOFTLY, SWIFTLY, SILENTLY.. LIKE A SHROUD! ONLY THE BURNING EYES OF THE CAR LIGHT HIS WAY...

MY NERVES ARE LIKE PULLED RUBBERBANDS. I'VE GOT TO RELAX! NO ONE COULD HAVE POSSIBLY SEEN ME KILL HIM.. I'M AS SAFE AS HE IS DEAD! OH, THERE'S A HITCH-HIKER! I'LL PICK HIM UP.. THAT'LL KEEP MY MIND OFF THINGS...

HOW ABOUT A LIFT, BUDDY.. YOU'RE GOING MY WAY...

SURE, JUST HOP RI.. NO, *NO. NO!* IT CAN'T BE.. I ..I *KILLED* YOU! NO-O-O-O-O-O-O!

ROD JAMS DOWN ON THE ACCELERATOR, AND THE CAR LURCHES FORWARD, CRAZILY. ROD'S FACE IS LIKE WHITEWASH, BUT AS HE ROARS THRU THE NIGHT AS DARK AS THE GRAVE, HE TALKS TO HIMSELF:..

THAT WAS A FOOL THING TO DO! C'MON, ROD OLD BOY, YOU'VE GOT TO GET HOLD OF YOURSELF! THIS IS NO TIME TO LOSE YOUR NERVE! THIS FOG IS PLAYING TRICKS WITH YOUR IMAGINATION.. LAUGH IT OFF... HA-HA-HA-HA...

BUT AS ROD FANCHER LAUGHS, TRYING TO KEEP HIS COURAGE UP, IT SOUNDS HOLLOW, AND SEEMS TO ECHO STRANGELY FROM THE BLACK WALLS OF NIGHT...

HA-HA-HA-HA! YOU'RE STILL GOING MY WAY.. AND IT'S A *LONG* TRIP...

I..I'M LOSING MY MIND! HOW COULD *HE* BE *HERE?* NO ONE PASSED ME GOING OVER THE BRIDGE! *THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING!*

I KNOW WHAT IT IS I NEED.. FOOD! I HAVEN'T EATEN ALL DAY. IF I GET A GOOD, HOT MEAL UNDER MY BELT, I'LL CHASE THESE STUPID HALLUCINATIONS AWAY! I..I'M DIZZY WITH HUNGER.. SURE.. SURE.. THAT'S WHAT IT IS...

NEED ANY GAS, SIR?

YOUR ORDER PLEASE.

YEAH, FILL 'ER UP.. NOW, YOU BRING ME THE BIGGEST STEAK YOU'VE GOT IN THE PLACE, WITH PLENTY OF GRAVY.. FRENCH FRIES...

I HOPE YOU CAN CHANGE THIS.. IT'S THE SMALLEST I HAVE. SAY, CAN YOU TELL ME HOW FAR I AM FROM MOUNTAINVILLE?

SURE, BUDDY...

YOU DON'T HAVE FAR TO GO NOW, BUDDY...

WELL, LOOK AT THE WAY THAT CRAZY FOOL IS DRIVING! HE'LL KILL HIMSELF!

CAN YOU IMAGINE THAT GUY! HE ORDERS THE MOST EXPENSIVE DINNER ON THE MENU AND THEN DRIVES OFF WITHOUT EATING IT!

THERE ISN'T MUCH TIME FOR ROD TO WONDER ABOUT WHAT HE HAS SEEN, FOR A FEW MOMENTS LATER HE HEARS A LONG EAR-PIERCING WAIL, AND ONLY THE VIEW IN HIS MIRROR SAVES HIS SANITY...

WOO-O-O-O-O-O-O

OH.. IT..IT'S ONLY A POLICE CAR! FOR A MINUTE I THOUGHT IT WAS..SOMETHING ELSE! THEY MUST BE AFTER ME..I THINK I'D BETTER TRY TO LOSE THEM..I'M TOO MIXED UP RIGHT NOW...

THEY'RE GAINING ON ME! I'VE GOT TO THINK OF A WAY TO GET OUT OF THE.. UGH.. I'M *HIT!*...

BLAM! BLAM!

OH..THAT BULLET'S LIKE A HOT KNIFE..IT ISN'T FAR TO THE HIDEOUT, NOW..I..I'VE GOT TO MAKE IT..THERE'S A WAY..IT'S MY ONLY CHANCE...

IF I CAN JUST GET DOWN THIS ROAD BEFORE THEY SEE ME...

WOOOOOO

DANGER ROAD REPAIR

SLAM!

THE SCREAMING, COMPLAINING BRAKES REFUSE TO HOLD, AND IN A SPLIT SECOND ROD'S CAR CAREENS CRAZILY OFF THE ROAD. THE SICKENING SOUND OF CRUSHED METAL IS THE LAST THING HE HEARS BEFORE LOSING CONSCIOUSNESS...

HOURS LATER...

OHHHH!.. WHERE AM I? I FEEL LIKE EVERY BONE IN MY BODY IS BROKEN..OUCH! MY SHOULDER.. NOW I REMEMBER.. I'VE GOT TO GET TO THE HIDEOUT..IT'S ONLY A FEW MILES FROM HERE...

EVERY STEP WAS AGONY FOR THE BROKEN AND WOUNDED BODY OF ROD FANCHER. AND HE REMEMBERED THE FACE HE HAD SEEN ALONG THE ROAD, AT THE DRIVE IN, AND WAS AFRAID TO TURN AROUND. HE FELT IT FOLLOWING HIM, AND FEAR PUSHED HIM ALONG THE LAST FEW YARDS...

AT LAST.. AT LAST..I MADE IT.. I'LL BE SAFE NOW.. MAY'LL BE HERE.. SHE'LL HELP ME.. MAY! MAY!

I'M COMIN'... I'M COMIN'...

MAY... WHERE'S MAY?

MAY? WHY, I GUESS YOU AIN'T HEARD ABOUT HER. SHE WAS WAITING TO MEET HER BOY FRIEND HERE.. FELLOW BY THE NAME OF FANCHER, BUT THERE WAS A RADIO REPORT THAT HE WAS KILLED IN A CAR ACCIDENT YESTERDAY. POOR GIRL WAS SO UPSET SHE COMMITTED SUICIDE.

HEY, WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU? WHO ARE YOU, ANYWAY?

HA-HA! ALL RIGHT, WELSH.. ALL RIGHT! YOU MADE ME PAY.. MAY IS DEAD. HA-HA!

THERE HE IS! EASY, HE'S ARMED. THAT'S ROD FANCHER. HE LEFT A TRAIL OF BLOOD THE WHOLE WAY...

BUT I TELL YOU YOU CAN'T TRY ME FOR MURDER! DON'T YOU SEE? I'M DEAD! I WAS *KILLED YESTERDAY.*

WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH THAT GUY?

NUTS! THERE WAS ANOTHER GUY CALLED FANCHER KILLED IN AN ACCIDENT YESTERDAY AND HE THINKS IT'S HIM! ABSOLUTELY DAFFY! HE'S WANTED DOWN STATE FOR THE MURDER OF A GUY NAMED WELSH, TOO...

AND SO, ROD FANCHER WAS SENT TO A JAIL FOR THE CRIMINALLY INSANE, A RAVING HUSK OF A MAN! THE DOCTORS SAY HIS OWN GUILT MADE HIS MIND PLAY TRICKS, THAT HE NEVER SAW WELSH'S GHOST.. BUT NO ONE CAN CONVINCE HIM HE ISN'T DEAD.. AND WHO KNOWS WHAT HE REALLY SAW THAT NIGHT!.....

WE DARE YOU TO READ

WILL YOU BE HYPNOTIZED? CAN YOU FACE IT? "SQUINT" AND THE REVENGING MUMMIES WILL FILL YOU WITH HORROR AS THEY STRUGGLE ABOARD THE SHIP OF THE DEAD IN THE "TOMB OF DRACULA"

THE VERY EARTH TREMBLES... A TOWN'S STREETS RUN RED WITH BLOOD... TERROR-FILLED CRIES FROM THE BOWELS OF THE EARTH TELL OF "MASSACRE OF THE GHOSTS".

HE MAY BE AMONG YOU NOW! GOOD AND EVIL TEAR AT HIS TWISTED MIND. HE IS A DR. JEKYLL AND A MR. HYDE, THE SANDS OF LIFE AND DEATH SIFT THROUGH HIS FINGERS. LOOK FOR THE "MAN WITH TWO FACES"

THE TOM-TOMS BEAT. SAVAGE WARRIORS CRINGE. THE HORRIBLE CURSES OF A TORTURED PEOPLE JOIN WITH THE PIERCING GROWLS OF A MAD GORILLA WHILE THE JUNGLE BLAZES IN... "PHANTOMS IN THE FLAMES"

Watch FOR THE BIG 2nd. ISSUE ON SALE SOON!

GHOSTS of Famous Pirates

WHEREVER MEN MEET AND TALK, STORIES OF *ADVENTURE* AND *MYSTERY* ARE SURE TO BE TOLD, AND, THE MAN WHO IS LISTENED TO THE *HARDEST* IS THE MAN WHO CAN TELL A STORY ABOUT THE *GHOST* OF A *FAMOUS PIRATE!* PERHAPS, ONE LIKE "*THE GHOST OF THE PIRATE 'BLACK' BELLAMY.*"

ONE NIGHT, IN THE YEAR 1717, A "SNOW," A THREE-MASTED SAILING VESSEL, WAS BEING *PURSUED* BY THE *PIRATE FLEET* OF *BELLAMY*, THE *BLACKEST* PLUNDERER ON THE DEEP.

WHAT THE *PIRATES* DID NOT KNOW WAS THAT THE BOAT THEY WERE CHASING WAS A *DECOY* TO GET THEM INTO THE HARBOR AND *GROUND* THEIR LARGER SHIPS IN THE SHALLOW WATER.

AS THE *CHASE* REACHED THE HARBOR, A SUDDEN *SQUALL* RIPPED IN FROM THE NORTH AND, SOON, THE SHIPS WERE BEING *TOSSED* AROUND ON THE *RAGING WAVES* LIKE CORKS.

BUT, THE *PIRATES* HAVING ALREADY ENTERED THE HARBOR *GASPED* WITH *HORROR* AS THEY REALIZED THEY HAD BEEN *TRICKED*. THEY COULD DO NOTHING, HOWEVER, AS THE STORM *DRAGGED* THEM TOWARDS THE ROCKS SURROUNDING THE BAY!

AS HIS SHIP NEARED ITS *DOOM*, "*BLACK*" *BELLAMY* RAISED HIS ARMS TO THE *EXPLODING* SKIES AND SHOUTED THAT HE WOULD *NEVER DIE*. HE WOULD *GUARD* HIS TREASURE, BURIED SOME TIME BEFORE, *FOREVER!*

THE WHOLE *PIRATE* FLEET WAS *DESTROYED* AND ITS ENTIRE CREW *KILLED* EXCEPT "*BLACK*" *BELLAMY!* INHABITANTS OF THAT NEW ENGLAND HARBOR CITY, TO THIS VERY DAY, SAY THAT A MAN IN ANCIENT CLOTHES WALKS ITS STREETS, PAYS HIS BILLS IN GOLD AND AVOIDS ANYTHING HOLY!

IT IS ALSO SAID THAT EVERY YEAR, ON THE NIGHT OF THE FLEET'S DESTRUCTION, THERE IS *LOUD LAUGHING* AND *BOISTEROUS TALKING* IN THE ROOM OF THE MAN IN THE ANCIENT CLOTHES. ONCE, SOMEONE LOOKED INTO THE ROOM AFTER SUCH A NIGHT AND SAW THE *REMAINS* OF A *SUPPER* FOR AT LEAST *TWENTY MEN!!!*

THEY SCREAMED WHEN I STARTED TO READ!

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WITCHES TALES

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MAGAZINE

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No. 1
JAN.

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